MORAL MULTILATERALISM:
THE OBAMA DOCTRINE'S CHRISTIAN REALISM

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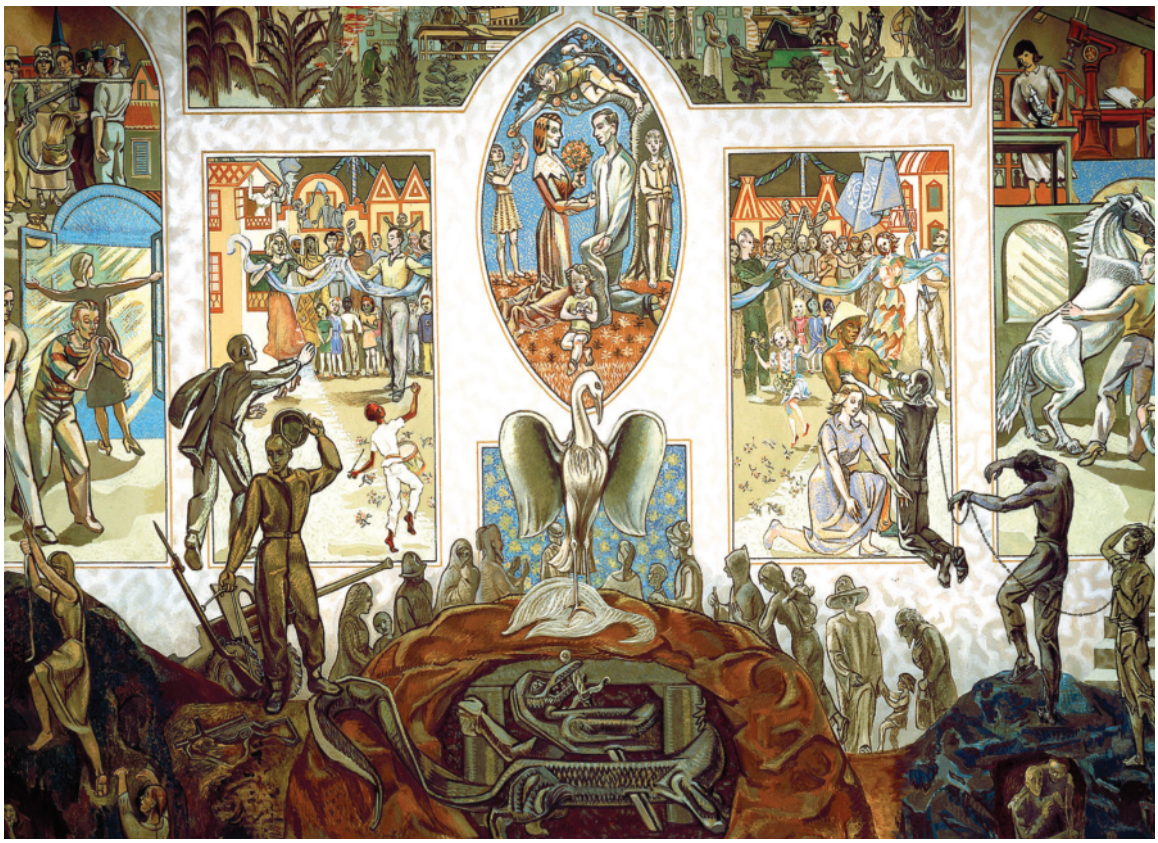


Mural by Per Krohg, donated to the United Nations by Norway in 1952. This gigantic image hangs in the UN Security Council Chamber in New York. In between horizontal depictions of hell and paradise, images saturated by the white-blue colors of the United Nations symbolize equality, unity, and peace elevating humanity from present reality to future hope. Source: United Nations. Photo of mural by Lois Conner, 1985.

Among the legacies American presidents leave are doctrines: formal declarations of principle governing when, where, or how the United States will use military force. By defining conditions justifying war, doctrines represent the tip of the spear of a president's foreign policy. They also represent the needle of its moral compass. As more than one Commander-in-Chief has lamented, no decision more profoundly tests one's beliefs in right and wrong, good and evil, duty and justice, than the one to send American servicemen and women into harm's way. Doctrines establish the standards for making such wrenching decisions.

The history of presidential doctrine-making stretches nearly two centuries. President James Monroe is credited with declaring the first in 1823, and the so-called Monroe Doctrine, which threatened U.S. military action if European powers sought to further colonize the Western Hemisphere, set the bar for presidents since. In the last one hundred years, at least eight presidents have promulgated eponymous doctrines, ranging from the Truman Doctrine, which committed the United States to assist in the defense of democracies against Soviet subversion, to the Bush Doctrine, which asserted a right to unilateral preventative attack.

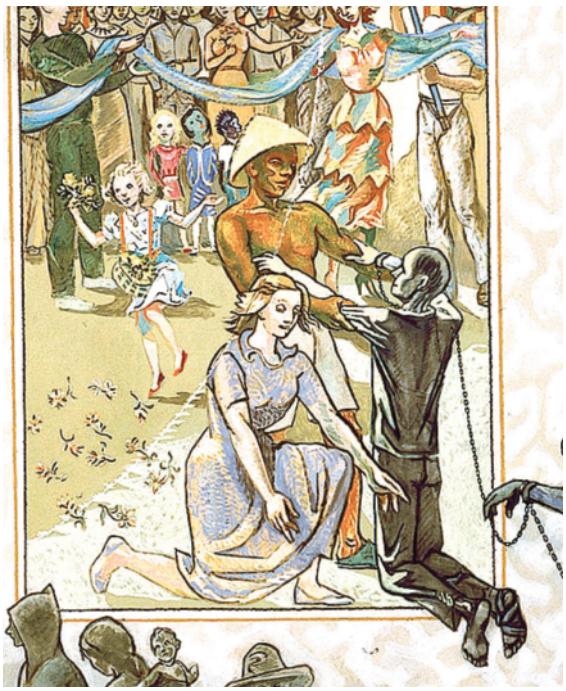
Will President Obama bequeath a doctrine? Some, even supporters, have argued that "there has not been, and likely will not be, any durable Obama doctrine of a particular positive note."[1] On the other hand, his critics have seized upon slogans to ascribe to the president doctrines ranging from the passive ("Leading from behind")[2] to the profane ("Don't do stupid sh*t").[3] President Obama himself seems allergic to the term "doctrine," adopting it rarely and reluctantly when pressed by journalists.[4] Its elusiveness has left scholars "searching for an Obama Doctrine."[5] Even the critically acclaimed feature story on the subject by Jeffrey Goldberg in a recent issue of *The Atlantic* does little to advance the search. In its nearly 20,000 words discussing President Obama's foreign policy, the term "Obama Doctrine" appears only once—in the title.[6]

In truth, however, the search is over—and has been since May 28, 2014. In a speech on that date to the graduating cadets of the United States Military Academy at West Point, President Obama explained the conditions under which Americans would take up arms:

> The United States will use military force, unilaterally if necessary, when our core interests demand it—when our people are threatened, when our livelihoods are at stake, when the security of our allies is in danger… On the other hand, when issues of global concern do not pose a direct threat to the United States—when crises arise that stir our conscience or push the world in a more dangerous direction but do not directly threaten us—then the threshold

> for military action must be higher. In such circumstances, we should not go it alone. Instead, we must mobilize allies and partners to take collective action.[7]

Circumstantial evidence confirms this statement's doctrinal status. The president's advisors raised expectations for a doctrine before the speech[8]; commentators greeted it as such immediately afterwards[9]; and the president himself later cited it when the occasion arose.[10] Moreover, no other public statement of President Obama's before or since competes with this singular pronouncement.



Unilateral force to counter direct threats, multilateral force to counter indirect threats—this syllogism captures the essence of President Obama's doctrine. Direct threats he defines as those aimed at America's "core" interests; by implication, indirect threats involve marginal interests. At West Point, President Obama asserted that core interests encompass defense of American citizens and territory, of economic interests, and of allies; elsewhere he has included in this category counter proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and interestingly, prevention of genocide. Marginal interests, by contrast, may be global dangers or noble causes, but pose no direct threat to the United States. Responding to humanitarian crises, protecting human rights, and enforcing international agreements appear to fall within this category.

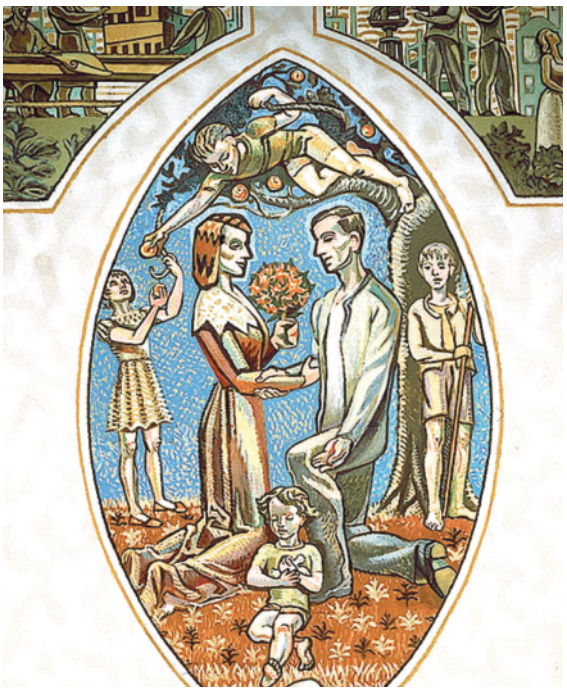
This taxonomy of interests deserves critical examination. But the deeper significance of the Obama Doctrine is not so much the classifications as the connections it draws from them. In effect, it links the ends and means of warfighting, and in so doing, simultaneously constrains and empowers the United States on the world stage. Behind the Obama Doctrine's deceptively simple syllogism lies an important reorientation in U.S. foreign policy.

To better appreciate the Obama doctrine's significance, it is useful to consider it in the context of another—the doctrine of just war. Just war doctrine, as one of its leading historians and *Providence* contributor James Turner Johnson observes, is a "historical tradition of thought" incorporating a broad variety of influences, including "theological and philosophical ethical reasoning."[11] As theologian Oliver O'Donovan has said, it enables the "improvisation of judgment" for waging war by leaders in a world with no universal system of justice or government.[12] Just war doctrine is thus "a tool to think with," as the modern revivalist of the tradition, Paul Ramsey, termed it.[13]

President Obama appreciates just war doctrine. He alluded to it at West Point, asserting that, "we still need to ask tough questions, about whether our actions are proportional, and effective, and just." More explicitly, he embraced it in his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech in Oslo, Norway five years before.[14] Here he recalled how "the concept of 'just war' emerged, suggesting that war is justified only when certain conditions are met." He challenged his audience "to think in new ways about the notions of just war and the imperatives of a just peace." Few presidents have spoken in greater depth on the subject than did President Obama at Oslo.[15]

In its classic form, just war doctrine posits that leaders are responsible not only for the protection of their citizens, but also for maintaining

tranquillitas ordinis, an ordered peace. To meet these responsibilities, they are morally bound to use force if necessary to mete justice as well as repel threats. Arms, however, are to be wielded more in sorrow than in anger, out of duty more than self-interest, and with the intent of reestablishing peace and justice. Furthermore, the use of force is to be governed by two sets of criteria: those pertaining to the decision to resort to war (*jus ad bellum*), and those pertaining to the way in which war is waged (*jus in bello*). The first set typically includes just cause, legitimate authority, right intention, proportionality, prospect of success, and last resort; the second includes discrimination and proportionality.

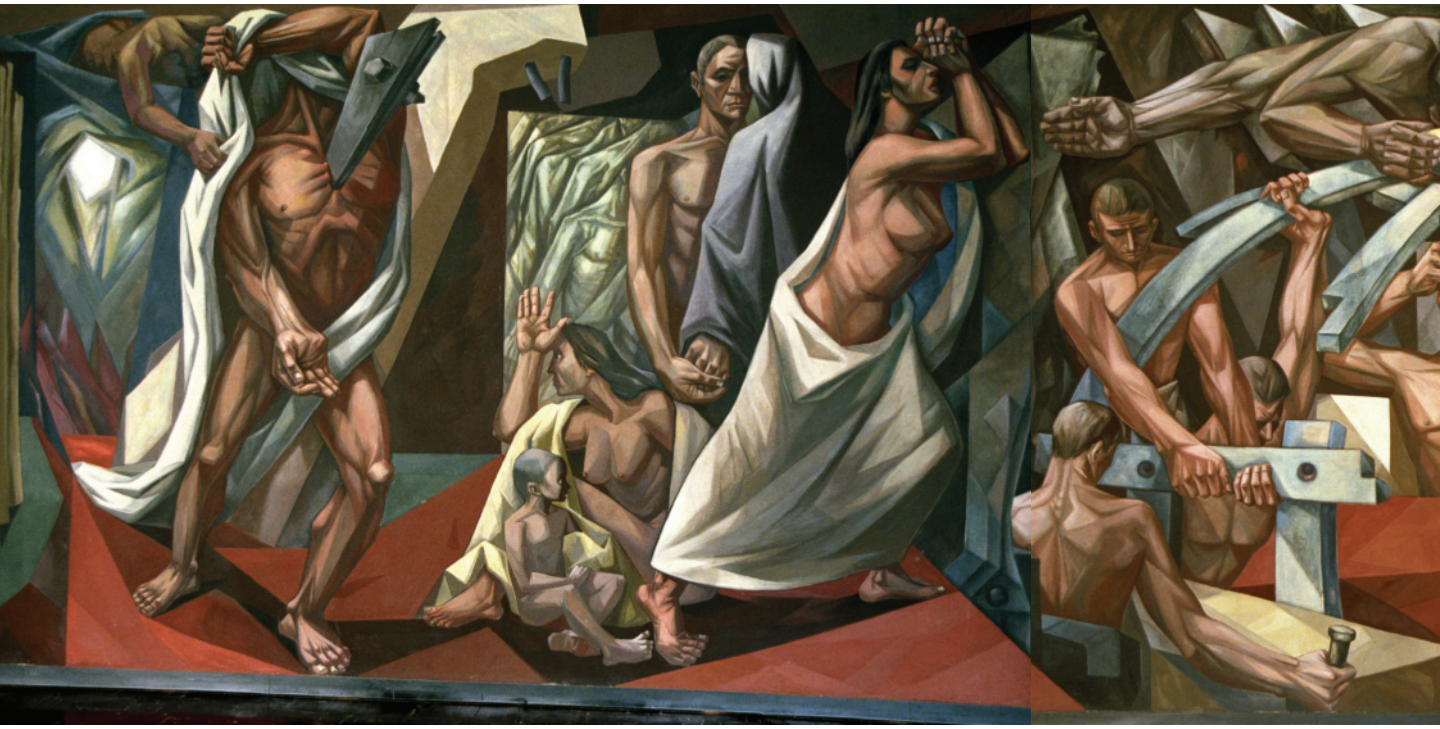


The Obama Doctrine addresses two of just war doctrine's *jus ad bellum* criteria: just cause and legitimate authority. The nature of just cause has altered over the centuries. At the dawn of the doctrine, it focused upon "avenging wrongs," according to St. Augustine.[16] Just cause has since been reduced, if one adheres to the Catholic Catechism, to entail only self-defense.[17] The meaning of legitimate authority has similarly evolved. Originally, as Johnson has chronicled, it was meant to reserve the use of force for causes other than self-preservation to those temporal leaders with no temporal superior (*auctoritas principis*).[18] The criterion was therefore intended to deter vigilantism and to challenge "the powers that be" to "bear not the sword in vain," per Romans 13:3-4, but for the common good. However, as just war doctrine extended beyond Christendom to inform the development of secular international law, legitimate authority was reduced to "merely a pro forma requirement"[19] conferred to duly constituted and recognized nation states.

Although these two just war criteria have changed over time, the relationship between them has remained fundamentally unchanged. As scholar Nigel Biggar has said, "The various criteria are connected by an internal logic that orders them, making some logically prior to others and imposing on the complex act of judgment a certain structure."[20] The "order of judgment," as Biggar contends, begins with consideration of just cause, followed by legitimate authority, and continuing with the remaining criteria. By contrast, Johnson, citing St. Aquinas, argues that legitimate authority stood prior to just cause in the classic understanding of the doctrine.[21] Regardless, this decision-making structure presupposes that each criterion is to be considered on its own terms and judged apart from the others in the first instance. No two criteria relate directly except to the extent that all relate equally in the final analysis. Ultimately, all criteria must be met to justify war.

The Obama Doctrine fundamentally alters this structure not by reordering the judgment, but by more closely interrelating just cause and legitimate authority. The president transforms these two criteria from independent to interdependent variables: the legitimacy of the authority seeking to wage war is dependent upon the nature of the just cause in question. According to the Obama Doctrine, cause and authority must be considered in tandem, with certain combinations passing muster, and other combinations not. The end (just cause) determines the means (legitimate authority).

One implication of this innovation in the structure of judgment is to impose a self-constraint on the unilateral use of force. Following the president's West Point speech,



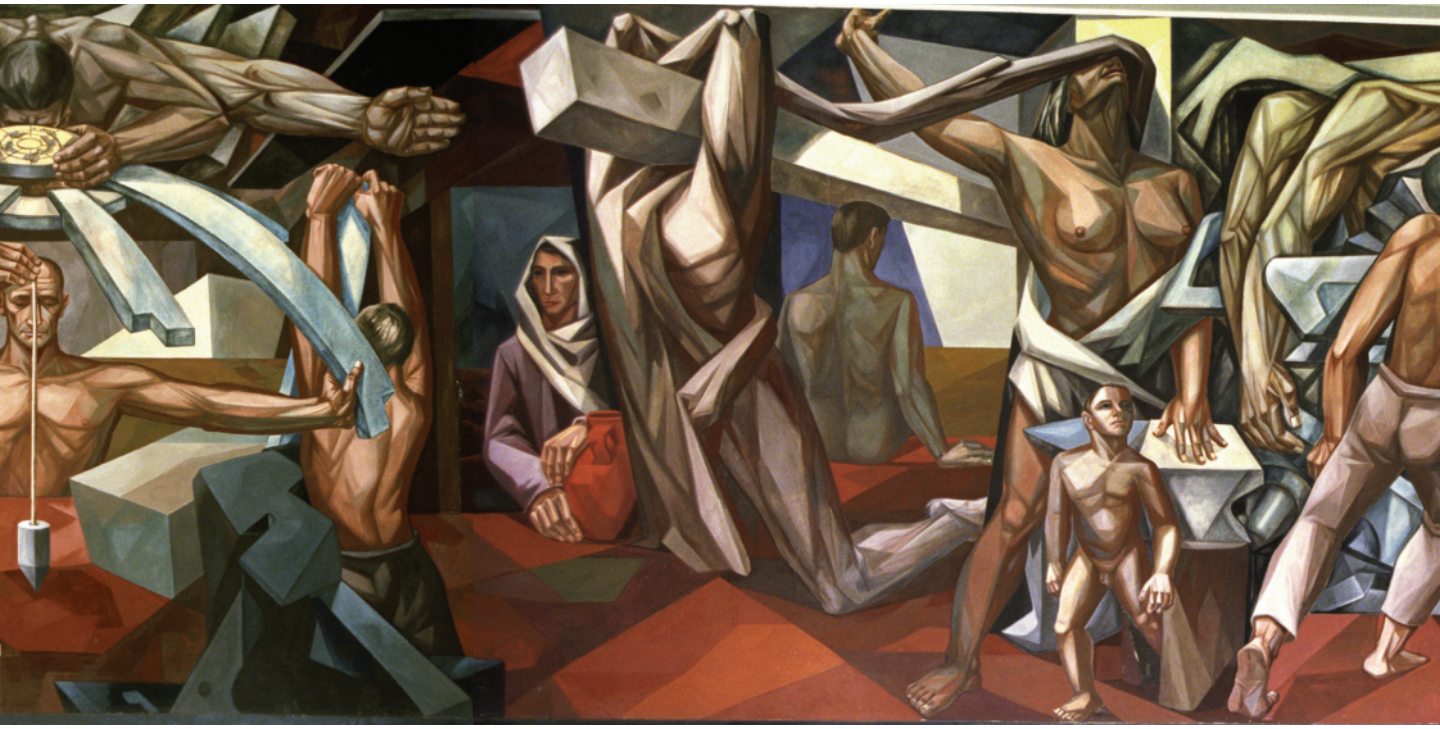
Detail from Mankind's Struggle for Lasting Peace *by José Vela-Zanetti, completed in 1953. The 20-yard long mural hangs in the third floor lobby of the United Nations Conference Building in New York. A triptych, the curved mural appropriates religious imagery to tell a salvation story: the destruction, rescue, and resurrection of a family—that is, the family of nations. In this first panel, concentration camp imagery conveys catastrophe. In the second panel, the family of nations comes together to rebuild the world. The seal of the United Nations is the capstone. Source: United Nations. Photos of mural by John Isaac, 1989.*

The Washington Post seized upon its linkage of ends and means to argue that it represents a "binding of U.S. power." "In effect, he ruled out interventions to stop genocide or reverse aggression absent a direct threat to the U.S. homeland or a multilateral initiative," the editors asserted.[22]

Less pronounced but no less profound is the expansion of the causes which could justify the use of American military power, albeit in concert with allies. Although he stated it in the negative, President Obama suggests military action may be appropriate to address interests beyond "core" ones. This is the inverse of the argument cited by *The Washington Post*: the Obama Doctrine rules out unilateral interventions to stop genocide or reverse aggression, but it also rules *in* such interventions when waged by a coalition of the willing. With his doctrine, the president challenges the principle of non-interference in the affairs of a sovereign country and lends credence to the emerging norm of the "responsibility to protect." If the Obama Doctrine is conservative in the application of unilateral power, it is radical in the application of multilateral power.

President Obama thus forges a double-edged sword: limiting the U.S. military's unilateral use, but expanding its multilateral use. This combination is unprecedented in the history of American presidential doctrines. No prior doctrine imposes explicit self-constraints, and certainly not external ones. On the other hand, several other presidential doctrines define causes beyond national self-defense, such as defense of "free peoples" and support for "the success of liberty." But none ties these causes so explicitly to the use of armed force or to multilateral action.

President Obama often defends this unprecedented preference for multilateralism by stressing its practical advantages. These include the manpower and materiel benefits of such a force "as more nations bear both the responsibility and the cost."[23] It also prevents "free riders" from failing to pay their



The third panel depicts the fruits of multilateral labor: the resurrection, through a united humanity, of the family of nations. Source: United Nations. Photos of mural by John Isaac, 1989.

"fair share," as the president said in a recent interview.[24] As he explained at West Point, "Collective action in these circumstances is more likely to succeed [and] more likely to be sustained."

This justification, however, rings hollow. It ignores crucial practical disadvantages, including the time-consuming nature of coalition-building, and the conflicting chains of command that often characterize multinational fighting forces. More importantly, the president's rationale does not fully account for the clear delineation the Obama Doctrine makes between unilateral and multilateral action. If the primary advantage of multilateralism is its practical benefits, why not insist upon it for addressing all threats, not just indirect ones?

A deeper reasoning is at work behind the Obama Doctrine. It contemplates a range of *causis belleorum*, all just, but some more proximate than others. Protecting innocent American civilians and protecting innocent civilians of another nation may be equally legitimate reasons for waging war. But the Obama Doctrine nonetheless distinguishes between these just causes based on their "directness"—the degree to which they impact or implicate the United States. Those interests which are more direct, such as protecting the homeland, warrant extraordinary measures, namely unilateral military action. Those which are less direct, but nevertheless equally morally justified, warrant the ordinarily preferable means, namely multilateral action. The role the president assigns to proximity in assessing interests highlights the importance he places on perspective. In essence, we have a clearer view of that which is closest to us. Furthermore, the exception he makes for unilateral action proves the rule of multilateral action. We should join others when we can, and go it alone only when we must.

When must the United States go it alone? Unilateral military action appears, for President Obama, to be an option of last

resort, but a live option nonetheless. His doctrine reserves it only for "core" interests and only when "necessary," as he explains at West Point. Given his preference for multilateral action, the latter condition suggests unilateral action is necessary when no ally or partner is willing to commit forces to the fight in time, either because they lack the will or the ability. Taken together, the "core" and "necessity" requirements leave precious few instances when President Obama appears willing to go it alone. Nevertheless, such instances have arisen during his presidency. The quintessential example of the application of the Obama Doctrine's unilateral imperative proved to be one of the president's signature accomplishments—the raid by U.S. forces into Pakistan to kill Al Qaeda terrorist leader Osama bin Laden in 2011. President Obama chose to go it alone without the cooperation of the United States' ostensible ally to advance a "core" interest—"when our people are threatened," as he describes it at West Point—when it was necessary to do so.

Notwithstanding its unilateral imperative, President Obama's doctrine can best be understood as one of moral multilateralism. It assigns moral value to collective security in a superficial sense, associating it with a "higher threshold" and applying it to causes that "stir the conscience." To the extent that morality is associated with altruism—consider the Golden Rule—it implies self-sacrifice and prioritizing others' needs above one's own. The president, with his doctrine, contemplates such national self-sacrifice, but only if such sacrifice is shared. Purely moral ends must be achieved through multilateral means.

But the Obama Doctrine also represents a moral multilateralism in a subtler way, one that acknowledges a sobering reality. In pursuit of a transcendent ideal, of causes that ostensibly rise above base self-interest, any nation—the United States being no exception—is invariably compromised ethically. It cannot escape the reality that its own motives are impure and that its perspective is blinkered. Multilateralism, combining not only the military but the moral resources of other nations beyond our own, serves to counteract this egoistic tendency. As the president said in a recent interview, "One of the reasons I am so focused on taking action multilaterally where our direct interests are not at stake is that multilateralism regulates hubris."[25] With his doctrine, President Obama seeks to reconcile the idealism of altruism and the realism of egoism in an actionable, regulated way.

This project mirrors the ministry of one of the president's "favorite philosophers,"[26] Reinhold Niebuhr, and the Christian realist school of thought he inspired. Niebuhr's Christian realism embraces ideals embodied in scripture and in church doctrine, while also grappling with the realities of power politics. It seeks the "relation between the good news of the gospel and the daily news of the world," in the words of scholar Eric Patterson.[27] This relation revolves around the belief that, as creatures made in the image of God, we are capable of aspiring to the law of love, of caring for our neighbors as we care for ourselves. At the same time, this relation is unavoidably tainted by sin and humans' innate tendency to overestimate their own righteousness. We are thus fated to careen between the poles of love and sin. As scholar Erik Owens has astutely observed, Christian realism holds these countervailing impulses in "generative tension."[28]

New York Times columnist David Brooks, who discovered Obama's "love" for Reinhold Niebuhr, has astutely analyzed his relationship with Christian realism. Brooks perceived the candidate's 2008 campaign as "an attempt to thread the Niebuhrian needle" between "naïve idealism and bitter realism," and asked rhetorically, "Has Obama thought through a practical foreign policy doctrine of his own—a way to apply his Niebuhrian instincts?"[29] Later, following the president's Oslo speech, he credited President Obama for having "revived the Christian realism that undergirded cold war liberal thinking." Responding to his own earlier question, Brooks opined that the president's "doctrine is becoming clear"—a balancing of "two seemingly irreconcilable truths—that war is both folly and necessary."[30]

President Obama's Christian realist doctrine did not fully crystalize, however, until his West Point speech five years later. It was here he found the practical means of applying Niebuhr's philosophy to American foreign policy by positioning multilateralism at the fulcrum of the scale balancing idealism and realism. The United States would not hesitate to act alone to defend its self-interests, the president asserted. But it would also strive to transcend self-interest by joining with others in defending the general interest. Sharing this sacrifice is essential, however, to mitigating the inherently selfish motives of any one nation, including the United States.

Equating multilateralism with Christian realism is anathema to some. As scholar and *Providence* contributor Joseph Loconte has argued, it appears to contradict a central tenet of Niebuhr's thought. The "apostles of multilateralism," Loconte writes, fail to understand that "Niebuhr's doctrine of sin… warns that injustice is easily magnified—not mitigated—by international institutions."[31] He cites Niebuhr, who criticized "world government" as a "rationalistic illusion which takes no account of the limited resources of reason."

Loconte erroneously conflates multilateralism with world government, and fails to note that Niebuhr himself greeted formation of the United Nations as a "wholesome development for America and the world."[32] Nevertheless, Loconte's underlying argument is a legitimate one. A deep skepticism about human institutions' ethical claims pervades the school of thought. In *Moral Man and Immoral Society,* Niebuhr pinpoints a paradox: leaders of institutions charged with protecting the interests of its members cannot responsibly choose to subordinate these interests to the common good. As he writes, "No one has the right to be unselfish with other people's interests." This reality renders human institutions "morally obtuse."[33] According to this logic, moral multilateralism is oxymoronic.

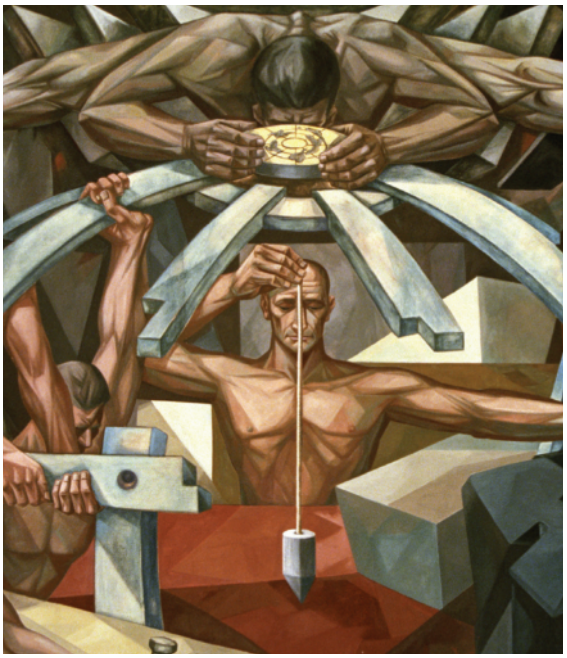
But is it? The strength of multilateralism, which the Obama Doctrine grasps, is its ability to mitigate the tendency of nations, driven by self-interest, to misjudge moral causes. Expanding the number of independent actors in the decision to wage war increases the "probability of doing justice," in Biggar's words.[34] The inherent conflicts of interest shaping the perceptions of individual nations can be offset by the competing interests of other nations consulted in a multilateral context.

Notwithstanding his mistrust in the moral motivations of human institutions, Niebuhr appreciates the potential of heterogeneous organizations that are structured to balance the needs of competing interests to more closely approximate justice than homogenous ones. This potential is reflected in his famous aphorism on democracy: "Man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible, but man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary."[35] In *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness,* Niebuhr explains how democracy guards against injustice. "The democratic techniques of a free society," Niebuhr writes, "place checks upon the power of the ruler and administrator and thus prevent it from becoming vexatious. The perils of uncontrolled power are perennial reminders of the virtues of a democratic society."[36] Later, he suggests the juxtaposition of competing interests is a defining feature of Christian realism. The church, he argued, should cultivate "Christian realists who know that justice will require that some men shall contend against them."[37]

It is this concept of justice through contention and the cross-examination of interests that served as the basis of Niebuhr's endorsement of the United Nations. He welcomed its establishment "as an organ in which even the most powerful of the democratic nations must bring their policies under the scrutiny of world opinion. Thus inevitable aberrations, arising from the pride of power, are corrected."[38] Multilateral institutions like the UN employ democratic techniques in the decision to resort to war.

Multilateralism, however, can "dissolve the notion of the responsibility,"[39] as scholar Eric Patterson has argued. With no single nation held accountable, it risks morally

irresponsible under-reaction or even inaction. At the same time, multilateralism reduces the risk of overreaction and of the naturally corrupting effects of concentrating power. The Obama Doctrine seeks to manage these risks. It mitigates against the danger of under-reaction for core interests by reserving the right to unilateral action; it mitigates against the peril of overreaction in response to sympathetic, even morally justified, causes by insisting upon multilateral action.



If, in theory, the Obama Doctrine presents a coherent moral vision, in his application of it, its shortcomings emerge. One such weakness is its inchoate criteria for differentiating direct, or "core," interests from indirect ones. The president's approach to crises that "stir our conscience… but do not directly threaten us" epitomizes the challenge. At West Point, he suggested that humanitarian crises fall into this category and therefore do not justify unilateral action. However, having previously launched his signature "Atrocity Prevention Board," he issued a directive that plainly declared "preventing mass atrocities and genocide is a core national security interest and a core moral responsibility of the United States of America."[40] As such, the Obama Doctrine would justify unilateral U.S. military action in response. Proximity appears in this case to be overridden by scale and urgency as factors in discerning the means, unilateral or multilateral, for using force—a vexing inconsistency.

Similarly, in two theaters of war where the president had the opportunity to apply his doctrine, its strengths and weaknesses emerged. In 2011, President Obama ordered airstrikes against the forces of Libyan leader Muammar el-Qaddafi, who was acting on threats to target not only rebels but also innocent Libyan civilians for destruction. This military intervention, following calls from the United States' European allies and the Arab League, culminated in a landmark United Nations Security Council resolution invoking the "responsibility to protect" norm. The intervention was dubbed "Operation United Protector"—a label neatly capturing the multilateral and moral impulses of the Obama Doctrine.

The president's official justification for the use of force in Libya mixes direct and indirect threats:

> Left unchecked, Qaddafi would commit atrocities against his own people… a humanitarian crisis would ensue. The entire region could be destabilized, endangering many of our allies and partners. The calls of the Libyan people for help would go unanswered. The democratic values that we stand for would be overrun. Moreover, the words of the international community would be rendered hollow.

Of the five reasons for action cited, only one—protecting allies—falls within the category of "core" interests President Obama defined at West Point, and even this interest is only impacted by a hypothetical sequence of events. Accordingly, the president's official justification stressed that the U.S. action was in "in support of international efforts to protect civilians and prevent a humanitarian disaster"—linking multilateral means with moral ends. Ultimately, this humanitarian impetus was cast in doubt after the inhumane execution of the Libyan leader and the subsequent implosion of governance in Libya. Nevertheless, Libya proved the strength of multilateralism to motivate the ostensibly

moral use of military force, and the effectiveness of the Obama Doctrine's mustering of American arms for altruistic causes in concert with allies.

However, these redeeming qualities of the Obama Doctrine proved to be critical impediments in the crucible of Syria. As the Syrian civil war erupted in 2012, President Obama infamously drew "a red line" that the ruling regime of Bashar Assad would cross if it utilized chemical weapons.[41] He claimed that such a violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention would "change my calculus" for U.S. military engagement, a thinly veiled threat for potential unilateral American airstrikes. The threat was tested a year later when the Assad regime indeed attacked a rebel-held suburb of Damascus with chemical weapons.

The sequence of events that followed dramatized the president's pursuit for validation, domestic if not international, before delivering on his earlier threat. Ten days after the chemical weapons attack, he claimed that he had "decided that the United States should take military action" in response to the "assault on human dignity."[42] He indicated he would "go forward without the approval of a United Nations Security Council," but noted that the Parliament of the United Kingdom failed to support intervention. The president, therefore, turned to Congress for approval, despite asserting "I have the authority to carry out this military action without specific congressional authorization."[43] Ultimately, the Russians preempted the Congressional debate by brokering an agreement with Syria to forfeit its chemical weapons arsenal.[44]

The president's equivocation during this episode betrays the confusion embedded within the Obama Doctrine surrounding whether upholding "the writ of the international community," in the president's words, is a core interest of the United States. He initially suggested that the United States was prepared to act alone in punishing the Assad regime for its transgression; his subsequent request for Congressional authorization, following a key ally's rebuff, suggested he doubted his own judgment and prioritized consultation over mobilization. Libya showed the Obama Doctrine's moral force; Syria showed its moral feebleness.

The Obama Doctrine is thus an imperfect instrument for directing the deployment of American arms. It requires sharpening, especially in its definition of core versus marginal interests, and in its moral rationale for multilateralism. Neither task is politically palatable—consigning some causes to marginal status invariably alienates the marginalized, and emphasizing the need for collective decision-making to prevent American misjudgment undermines the popular belief in "American exceptionalism."

Nevertheless, the Obama Doctrine's foundation is sound, and its structure is innovative. In interrelating just cause and legitimate authority, it fulfills the president's call to think anew about just war doctrine. It also responds to calls for crafting an approach to the use of force reflecting President Obama's "Niebuhrian instincts." These include, on the one hand, the instinct that inaction in the face of manifest threats or consummate evils represents an "ignoble prudence," in Niebuhr's words; on the other hand, that acting on one's own "fragmentary wisdom" alone represents a "spiritual vanity." The needle of the moral compass the president sets with his doctrine points to the magnetic pole of Christian realism.

Does President Obama, with his doctrine, leave a positive legacy? Will the Obama Doctrine prove enduring, or ephemeral? Historian Richard Neustadt has argued that a president's doctrine is successful if his successor adopts it, unsuccessful if he or she discards it.[45] By this standard, the Obama Doctrine is, at a minimum, consequential. In embracing multilateralism—indeed, making it the fulcrum of the balance between direct and indirect interests—President Obama effectively discards, in words if not deeds, his predecessor's policy of championing unilateralism. The Obama Doctrine thus begins the dismantling of the Bush Doctrine, per Neustadt's analysis. As for a final verdict on the Obama Doctrine, we must await the

judgment of a jury of his peers across future administrations..

Regardless, President Obama leaves for his successor not only a double-edged sword, but also a two-sided shield, one meant to deflect outward attacks to the United States, but also to reflect, like a mirror, America's inward vulnerabilities. The Obama Doctrine's moral multilateralism addresses the United States' duties as the world's preeminent power to weigh global interests as well as national ones. At the same time, it confronts the danger of moral misjudgment that superpower status can impute. As such, the Obama Doctrine may be discarded, but it cannot be ignored. P

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Endnotes

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2 *See Charles Krauthammer, "The Obama Doctrine: Leading from Behind: A Foreign Policy of Hesitation, Delay, and Indecision." National Review, April 29, 2011.*

3 *See David Rothkopf, "Obama's 'Don't Do Stupid Sh*t' Foreign Policy." Foreign Policy, June 4, 2014.*

4 *See Tom Friedman, "Iran and the Obama Doctrine," New York Times, April 5, 2015.*

5 *Owens, Erik. "Searching for an Obama Doctrine": Christian Realism and the Idealist/Realist Tension in Obama's Foreign Policy." Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics, 32, 2 (2012): 93-111.*

6 *Goldberg, Jeffrey. "The Obama Doctrine." The Atlantic, April 2016.*

7 *Remarks by the President at the United States Military Academy Commencement Ceremony. West Point, New York. May 28, 2014.*

8 *Horsley, Scott. "Obama To Use West Point Speech To Lay Out Foreign Policy Doctrine." National Public Radio, May 28, 2014.*

9 *See Janine Davidson, "The Obama Doctrine." Council on Foreign Relations: Defense in Depth blog, May 29, 2014.*

10 *See Statement by the President on ISIL, September 10, 2014: "And it is consistent with an approach I outlined earlier this year: to use force against anyone who threatens America's core interests, but to mobilize partners whenever possible to address broader challenges to international order."*

11 *Johnson, James Turner. Ethics and the Use of Force: Just War in Historical Perspective. Ashgate, 2011, p. 2.*

12 *O'Donovan, Oliver. Just War Revisited. Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 8.*

13 *Quoted in ibid, p. 127.*

14 *Remarks by the President at the Acceptance of the Nobel Peace Prize, Oslo, Norway, December 10, 2009.*

15 *President George H.W. Bush did address the topic at length in remarks at the Annual Convention of the National Religious Broadcasters, January 28, 1991.*

16 *Augustine, Questiones in Heptateuchum, q. x, Super Josue; ibid.*

17 *Catechism of the Catholic Church, articles 2308-9.*

18 *Johnson, James Turner. Sovereignty: Moral and Historical Perspectives. Georgetown University Press, 2014.*

19 *Johnson. Ethics and the Use of Force.*

20 *Biggar, Nigel. In Defense of War, Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 251.*

21 *Johnson, James Turner. Sovereignty: Moral and Historical Perspectives.*

22 *Washington Post Editorial Board. "President Obama, in his West Point speech, binds America's hands on foreign affairs." May 28, 2014*

23 *Remarks by the President on the Situation in Libya, March 18, 2011.*

24 *Goldberg, Jeffrey. "The Obama Doctrine." The Atlantic, April 2016.*

25 *Ibid.*

26 *Brooks, David. "Obama, Gospel and Verse." New York Times April 26, 2007.*

27 *Patterson, Eric. "A Fire in their Minds: Christian Realism and Democracy Promotion." 2009.*

28 *Owens, Erik. "Searching for an Obama Doctrine", 93-111.*

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